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ABSTRACT

Team teaching has recently been introduced to the program in instructional design and technology in the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh (Pennsylvania). For the past 3 years, collaboration and cooperation have been undertaken in the teaching of two graduate seminars: Research in Instructional Design and Technology, and Professional Issues. Of special concern are the affective results of such collaboration among the graduate students in the courses. The design of the courses, the textbooks chosen, the syllabus constructed, and the amount and quality of student participation in class required, are teaching methods that directly influence student affective behavior as well as set the tone for the classroom environment. Instructional effectiveness is often contingent more upon instructor sensitivity to classroom dynamics than on the instructional presentation. Team teaching requires formative evaluations of each class in which the collaborators review class activities and discuss what seemed to work and what didn't. At the end of the semester, students complete a teaching evaluation form for each course. The results of student evaluations may influence changes to be made for future courses. Most students describe a positive reaction to team teaching, to the teaching methods developed, and the style adopted for the graduate courses. (DB)

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AFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE LEARNING

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Presented February 12, 1992 at the Annual Convention of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology, Washington, D.C.

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Introduction

Graduate college teaching is usually a highly personalized effort of a single individual, working alone with his or her students. While he or she may have the help of a graduate assistant, a college professor usually selects the text, writes the syllabus, writes and grades the exams, reads the papers and, not incidentally, teaches the course as a solo performance.

There are certainly advantages to the process of solo teaching. One retains complete control. One decides what he or she wants to do, and then does it. There is a certain merit from the students' point of view as well. There never is any ambivalence about who is to be praised for a job well done, or who is to be criticized in the event of an instructional disaster. The chain of responsibility is very clear and short.

One of the hazards of such an enterprise, however, is found in the classic question of the assertion of experience: "I have 20 years of teaching experience," to which the interested colleague speculates, "perhaps you have just had the same experience 20 times." This, of course, is a risk taken by most college faculty.

An interesting alternative to this is a teaching collaboration. Three years ago, the authors began such an effort which has grown more refined and useful both for ourselves and for our students. In the process, we both have given up a certain amount of control and a certain amount of independence. We have learned to plan much more carefully and to accept the separate expertise that the other can provide. While it has been a much more time consuming process than teaching solo, the benefits of the thoughtful input of two colleagues have had a very beneficial effect on our students.

In the process of this collaboration, we have become more and more aware of the effect it has had on the intellectual climate of our classroom. Our first concerns were to insure the accuracy of the content of the courses taught. With that verified beyond any doubt, we began to examine some of the factors that seemed to account

for the atmosphere in our classroom and the attitudes held by our students about the courses in which we have played a collaborative role. In the following few pages we would like to identify some of the issues we feel are important and share some of the tentative conclusions we have drawn.

Background

The Program in Instructional Design and Technology in the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh is 27 years old. The senior author of this paper joined that faculty when it was in its infancy. Most of our graduates were recruited by public school districts as media specialists. We had a handful of international students and a faculty of five.

In the intervening years, the Program, as well as the profession, has changed a great deal. Fewer of our graduates are now retained by the public schools; about 20%. Another 20% accept positions in the health professions, a third 20% go to higher education, and a fourth 20% into business and industry. The remaining 20% are international students who return home to their own countries to accept leadership positions there, usually as faculty members in a major university, or as key staff members in the ministry of education, charged with the development of instructional design and technology programs for their own country.

The faculty have long been concerned about the process of professionalizing our students. Central to that concern has been two courses of long standing. The first, Research in Instructional Design & Technology, deals with the existing research of the field, and helps students separate the good from the bad; the valid from the invalid; the important from the insignificant. The second course, entitled Professional Issues, deals with the major current issues and controversies of the field and the major figures of the field; those individuals whose contributions are particularly important or unique.

For the past three years, the authors have undertaken a collaboration in the teaching of both of these courses. Both are taught in a seminar format ranging in size from 6-18 students. The Research Seminar is required of master's students and the Professional Issues Seminar is required of doctoral students. However, both doctoral and master's students are found in each seminar.

While each of these courses has been taught, at various times, by other members of our faculty, responsibility for them has rested with the senior author in recent years.

For the past three years, we have attempted, through this collaborative process, to insure that both of these courses are current, significant experiences that encourage

thoughtful debate, develop understanding and cultivate a comprehensive perspective on the profession. Our special concern this year has been an exploration of the affective strategies of both courses that seem to enhance our goals.

The Faculty

The junior collaborator (JC) is a 1989 doctoral graduate of the Program in Instructional Design and Technology at the University of Pittsburgh, who has over a decade of experience as a clinical social worker, educator, and corporate trainer. The (SC) is a professor in the Program with 34 years of experience in the field. Our initial and continuing concern for these two courses and the students enrolled in them has been to insure accuracy and completeness of content and to provide an intellectual climate that is exciting, challenging and worthy of our best efforts.

The Effect of Affect

The underlying intellectual climate and the attitudes that students develop about a course lie in a careful design in which affective concerns are central. To presume to have an affective strategy suggests an understanding of the emotions, the values and the motivation of one's students. Most college teachers have spent years developing a command of a variety of subject matter, and, to a lesser extent, the techniques of imparting that information to classes of students.

What is rarely considered is the value the student attaches to the classroom experience, his or her attitude while there and the motivation, or lack of it, to continue, to persevere and to excel.

In the late sixties, the SC arrived at the University of Pittsburgh and began his first teaching assignment at that institution. During those interesting but frustrating years, students were successful in demanding "relevancy" in all that they undertook. One major effort was the deemphasis of the letter grade; often to a "pass-fail" dichotomy or a "satisfactory-unsatisfactory" determination of quality. Grading was thought to be "not relevant" and thus was de-emphasized.

The SC, in an effort to be perceived as current and sensitive to student needs, thought it wise to deemphasize grades and did -- by scarcely mentioning them. A big mistake. He also assumed that the University of Pittsburgh maintained the same standards as his alma mater -- also a big mistake. He found himself the object of

student anger by grading them against a standard that was not discussed and by using another institution as a standard of quality.

After this first evaluation disaster, the following semester he took time the first night of class to explain the grading system in detail and his expectations of student quality in their writing, in their examinations and in their participation in class. The quality of student work rose to an astonishing level. The SC had discovered his first affective strategy: Specify your expectations clearly and up front.

The Design

Our current efforts have emerged through the imperatives of classic instructional design; "Design, Develop, Implement, Evaluate!" Our first task has always been to review student evaluations of the preceding semesters, together with our own feelings about what went right and what needed to be improved. This process is often supplemented by conversations with individual former students after grades have been received. We then contemplate major possible changes and debate the impact of each suggestion. This discussion is always characterized by an examination of our respective points of view about changes within the field, new issues and possible changes in emphasis as new concerns suggest such changes.

Frequently, these discussions have led to the conclusion that several points of view should be presented. Since a basic goal within each of the seminars has been to stimulate discussion and debate, we present students with at least two alternative points of view about a single concept. Students are given the opportunity to consider contrasting points of view about a single question.

Once decisions about revisions have been made, we examine textbook possibilities -- always on the lookout for a text that further enhances our long range goals while remaining on the cutting edge of current issues.

This year, we used Gary Anglin's new book entitled, *Instructional Technology*, for the research course, and have retained O. B. Hardison's 1990 book, *Disappearing Through the Skylight: Culture and Technology in the Twentieth Century*, for the professional issues course.

The Anglin book was selected because it seemed to represent an excellent cross-section of current research and contemporary thinking on most of the major issues thought to be essential to an understanding of the research of the field. Hardison's book has been retained because it does a specially fine job of assisting students in relating instructional technology to the broader issues of technology in society at large, one of the major objectives of the Professional Issues course. Other classic and

current reading materials are assigned during the semester to supplement discussions, ideas, or questions raised.

Syllabus Construction

After several sessions devoted to the interpretation of former course evaluations, an analysis of new and different approaches to our objectives, a decision about the use of textbooks, and a reexamination about content and structure, we prepare the written syllabus. This process helps us look at the interactions among class lectures, reading assignments, examinations and deadline dates for the submission of papers.

The distribution of the finished syllabus to each student on the first night of class is helpful in several ways. It, of course, provides the student with a blueprint of the course including assignments, topics to be covered and deadlines to be met. If carefully and thoroughly done, it also should convey several important affective messages, i.e., "This course has been carefully constructed and is intended to meet specific objectives that have been identified. Your contributions to it are not only welcome but eagerly sought. Your efforts will be fairly judged and feedback will be provided to you in a timely fashion."

While the distribution of an accurate and carefully constructed syllabus the first night of class certainly guarantees nothing, it is an important message to students who are always, at this point, assessing the effort that they intend to make, constructing a strategy of dealing with the course, and attempting to get some feeling about the style of the instructor(s).

Goals and Affective Strategies

Affective goals and processes provide a framework around which content is taught. Our primary affective goal has been the development of a classroom climate that encourages the sharing of ideas. Considerable care must therefore be taken to insure that students feel comfortable with both the instructors' styles and with each other. Emphasis is placed on the special backgrounds of each student and the contributions that each is expected and specially invited to share. Questions and participation are encouraged and supported. Some of the specific criteria for the establishment of this kind of climate are based in patience with students who do not speak easily or well. Class size is usually limited to fewer than twenty students so that the instructors can become well acquainted with each student's background, interests and abilities. This

permits more individual attention to the intellectual development of each student. During class, more personalized direction encourages students to initiate debate and to follow-up where appropriate; to share their expertise, and often, to provide unique contributions to the class. This has been found to be particularly important with international students, who are often reticent but who frequently have a unique point of view. Obviously, particular care must be exercised with students for whom English is not a first language. Once in a while, it must be admitted, an apparently timid international student is discovered using poor English and reticent behavior as a mask for lack of ability or motivation. However, behind the sometimes timid participation of an international student with newly acquired English skills, often lies a level of sophistication unmatched elsewhere in the classroom.

Seminar goals cannot be realized unless all students attempt to articulate their ideas. This does not mean that all comments are relevant. Part of the process, and the challenge, is to be supportive to students while helping them understand that some ideas need elaboration but others need to be redirected or discarded. A good teacher needs to be skilled at identifying and expressing these sometime subtle differences.

If students do not feel intellectually comfortable in class, learning cannot be optimized. They must feel respected and must be treated with courtesy. They must also feel that they are important and that the instructors regard them as important.

When carefully cultivated, such an affective climate pays off handsomely. With suitable encouragement, students become more and more willing to broaden their thinking and take intellectual risks.

Improvisation

One very useful way to cultivate intellectual risk taking is through building collaborative improvisation into the instructional process. Generations of advisors have counseled their students, "If you don't know where you are going, any route will get you there." We know where we are going, but make it clear that there are many routes to intellectual bliss.

Not unlike a string quartet, the collaborating instructors have developed their skills with practice, over an extended period of time. Both are impelled to pay very close attention to the dynamics of class activity and have learned to anticipate the other's intellectual reactions.

One of the important by-products of good planning and good communication is the freedom that it provides. With a firm grasp of the subject matter, and mutual

advance understanding of the goals of a specific class, it is much easier to deal with unanticipated directions that the class might take. Both collaborators are free to concentrate on the introduction of material, the discussion and debate about it, the reaction of students and responses that seem appropriate, without being concerned that important goals will be neglected. Careful planning makes spontaneity possible as questions arise, as observations are made and as examples are supplied.

As with any elaborate orchestration, each collaborator must do his or her best to anticipate the other's next move to insure a smooth transition from one topic to another and to do one's best to provide a balance of viewpoints, particularly if they differ -- which, in our case, occurs with some regularity. Students can only benefit from an articulate expression of several points of view.

Performance, though, is more than just preparation, content accuracy and smooth transitions. Effective affective instruction must be exciting, with an extraordinary level of enthusiasm apparent to learners. The craft of teaching becomes the art of an affective environment when it communicates the teacher's passion for the subject. If the intellect is to be enhanced, the imagination must be engaged!

Managing Classroom Behavior

Adult students taking graduate coursework, come to class with a number of reasonable expectations. They expect the instructor(s) to be knowledgeable, articulate, sympathetic, punctual, well organized, fair, temperate, predictable, and able to handle all situations in class.

Clearly, one of the best ways to insure class discussion, for instance, is to articulate an expectation of that kind of activity; both in person and in writing, usually in the syllabus. Second, one must plan time for class discussion. Third, actual verbal interactions must be encouraged. As was mentioned above, the presentation of alternative points of view of the collaborators is often an important topic launching technique. Other techniques include a summary of assigned reading or an introductory reference to it. Then, patience is required. Some students require time to think through their responses. Others, of course, plunge right in; some thoughtfully, some not.

One of the most challenging classroom problems is that of the student who feels compelled to respond to every inquiry, and the contrasting problem of the student who never responds unless response is demanded of him or her.

The SC has discovered embarrassingly late in his career, that nothing, apparently, incenses students more than a student who is permitted to dominate a classroom.

Such students are often interesting, knowledgeable and sometimes intellectually seductive. A responsible professor must be certain that that student consumes only his fair share of the time available. To fail to control such a student is to invite disaster. Usually, failure to recognize such a student will be sufficient. Sometimes, however, a private conversation is necessary.

The other side of this problem is, of course, the student who never contributes when discussion is underway. Some claim uneasiness, caused by a variety of reasons; some claim that they learn more by listening (not a bad argument); some have not done their reading or other assignments and some are reticent by nature. For the international student, it is often lack of English proficiency. Whatever the reason, students need to be encouraged to contribute. Such students can, and often do, make important contributions. Questions must be clear and unambiguous, and students must be given sufficient time to construct a response. Failure to respond immediately, followed by the same question asked of another student, only frustrates the student and leads to embarrassment and possible loss of self-esteem. Obviously, some students cannot or will not respond, regardless of the patience and perseverance of the instructor. For such students, a private conversation may be all that is needed.

The explicit attempt at fairness and evenhandedness by the instructor is an important ingredient to the cultivation of an environment in which ideas can be exchanged with vigor and clarity.

Another useful technique relates to the special expertise of students. Sometimes, students with specially interesting or unique backgrounds are reluctant to discuss them for fear of being perceived as introducing inappropriate topics or wasting class time. If such experience is actually relevant, an invitation by the instructor to share it with the class is usually all that is required. Such invitations are particularly helpful with students who show discomfort speaking in class. Asking them to deal with material that is well known to them and uniquely theirs inspires confidence and often represents a turning point in a student's contributions in class.

Empowerment

Perhaps the most important dimension to the meeting of affective goals is the idea of empowerment. Students must own their ideas and must be encouraged to take pride in their development. Instructors must be careful to acknowledge the articulation of creative and innovative contributions in class. Intellectual property must be highly regarded and recognized.

The exploration of alternatives is the essence of both courses. Students test alternatives against their own knowledge base. Our role is one of intellectual coaching. The great sense of satisfaction for most students is the gradual adding of new knowledge to an existing base, resulting in new levels of understanding.

The complex interaction of instructor driven and individual knowledge construction, along with a contagious sharing of enthusiasm, is the essence of our efforts. It is this interaction which results in the exciting intellectual climate in both courses.

Formative Evaluation

Following each class, the collaborators spend at least one hour reviewing the activities of the preceding two and one-half hours. What seemed to "work" and what didn't are always discussed. Each is usually asked about his or her perceptions of the other's contributions. While this approach is admittedly biased, it is very helpful. Perceptions about the level of understanding of students is always an important part of the discussion. Meeting immediately after the class permits perceptions to be shared when they are fresh and are as accurate as possible. This activity is regarded as one of the major advantages of collaborative teaching, since a solo teacher does not have this opportunity for immediate feedback and evaluation.

Following the course, careful analysis is made of the Student Opinion of Teaching Questionnaire. This survey is administered to the class by the University Office of Measurement and Evaluation of Teaching. The questionnaire, consisting of a standardized set of questions, is administered in the absence of the instructor(s). Faculty are permitted to add special questions from a question bank provided by the Office. One disadvantage of the form for collaborative teaching is that only one instructor is evaluated. Because he is the only faculty member on the team, the SC has been the individual evaluated in each case. While no questions relate specifically to "collaborative teaching", special questions selected do address "team teaching."

In addition to post-class and post-course evaluation, extensive evaluation goes into pre-course preparation, as described above, based upon the efforts of the preceding term.

Analysis of the Process

This collaboration has been very hard work for both of us. Each has had considerable experience as a solo teacher. Each has developed habits in that role that do not work in a collaboration. Thus we have had to identify and give up some of our habits in order to make the process work.

One major advantage has been the opportunity to reflect, with each other, about alternative teaching strategies, and particularly those techniques that enhance the affective environment that concerns us so much. We have both become convinced that the quality of that environment, as perceived by our students, is the most important factor in creating a climate in which ideas can be developed and freely exchanged.

In the process, we continually ask how we can improve the quality of students' work. One certain way, we have discovered, is to make sure that students know that high quality is expected as a matter of routine, not as an exception to mediocrity.

It is also apparent to us that obvious respect for students' work is an important route to enhanced quality. All student work is read with the greatest of care. With two knowledgeable readers, feedback can be doubled and alternative points of view can be discussed. Students' papers are returned with comments on virtually every page. In addition, each student receives a one-page summary of the evaluation of the paper. This has created a climate of good communication between collaborators and students. Students have every right to expect that their work will be promptly, fairly and critically evaluated. When it is, important learning takes place and students feel very positive about the process. As a result, written work is prepared with great care and evaluated with equal seriousness.

We are excited about the value that students appear to attach to both courses. In the three terms that we have collaborated, the general quality of student presentations and papers seems to have substantially improved. We have asked for higher quality and have gotten it. Unexplained absences are almost unheard of. Students seem to be willing to take intellectual risks that were uncommon three years ago. Students seem to be willing to undertake more complex tasks, and to pursue them with greater vigor.

During each of the past three years, both courses have been evaluated through the use of the Student Opinion of Teaching Questionnaire. We have yet to receive a negative comment regarding the affective climate or the intellectual environment of these courses. Many students describe a positive reaction to the techniques we have developed and the style we have adopted for these courses.

Our efforts are dynamic and, we think sensitive to student needs. We have profited from the experience and hope that our students share our enthusiasm. Their intellectual development continues to be the real measure of our efforts.

Like a well reviewed play, a stimulating classroom is always regarded with excitement and anticipation. The actor (and teacher) does more than just read his lines. Success in the classroom requires an outstanding performance based on a complete command of content.